

Natural Resources Commission Meeting

NRC Policy Committee on
Wildlife & Fisheries

July 11, 2013



NRC Policy Committee on Wildlife and Fisheries

- Fisheries Chief Update
- WLD Chief Update
- Waterfowl Regulatory Update



Proposed Orders

- NRC – For Information
 - Waterfowl and Other Migratory Bird Hunting Regulations for 2013 – 2014 (WCO Amendment No. 15 of 2013)
 - Deer Season Ground Blind Placement (WCO Amendment No. 16 of 2013)
- Director – For Information
 - Order to Regulate Use of Pointe Mouillee State Game Area, Wayne and Monroe County (LUOD No. 13 of 2013)



Proposed Orders

- NRC – For Action
 - Renaming of Special Deer Hunts, Hunter Qualifications and Harvest Types, Ground Blinds and Hunters with Disabilities, Standing Vehicle Permits (WCO Amendment No. 10 of 2013)
 - Antlerless Deer License Quotas (WCO Amendment No. 11 of 2013)
 - Waterfowl Regulatory Update; Early Waterfowl Seasons Regulations (WCO Amendment No. 12 of 2013)
 - Designation of Game Species (WCO Amendment No. 13 of 2013)
 - Wolf Regulations as a Game Species (WCO Amendment No. 14 of 2013)





Fisheries Division Update

Department of Natural Resources

Jim Dexter, Chief
Fisheries Division
July 11, 2013



Wildlife Division Update



Russ Mason, Chief
Wildlife Division
July 11, 2013



Multi-Year Regulations Update

- The NRC's Governance Workgroup asked us to look at the frequency of wildlife regulations
- The NRC now has authority to regulate the taking of fish per 2013 PA 21
- Fisheries and Wildlife Division would like to recommend a regulatory proposal in September in order to coordinate process and workflow



Deer Season

Ground Blind Placement

- Current Regulations
 - Ground Blinds: Public land placement after Nov. 5 for deer hunting
 - Raised Platforms: Public land placement beginning Sept. 1
- Proposed Change
 - Aligning ground blinds with raised platforms for Sept. 1 placement for deer hunting



Thank You

www.michigan.gov/wildlife



Hunting Regulations for Late Waterfowl Season Dates



Barbara Avers, Waterfowl and Wetland Specialist
Wildlife Division
July 11, 2013



Regulations Schedule

Early Seasons

- February/March
 - Mississippi Flyway Council
 - Citizen's Waterfowl Advisory Committee (CWAC)
- June
 - Regulations for information at NRC
 - USFWS Regulations Committee
 - Set early season framework
- July
 - Regulations for action at NRC Meeting
 - Early Season Selections Due to USFWS

Late Seasons

- July
 - Regulations for information at NRC
 - Mississippi Flyway Council
 - USFWS Regulations Committee
 - Set late season framework
- August
 - CWAC Meeting
 - Regulations for action at NRC
 - Late Season Selections Due to USFWS



Regulations Schedule

Early Seasons

- February/March
 - Mississippi Flyway Council
 - Citizen's Waterfowl Advisory Committee (CWAC)
- June
 - Regulations for information at NRC
 - USFWS Regulations Committee
 - Set early season framework
- July
 - Regulations for action at NRC Meeting
 - Early Season Selections Due to USFWS

Late Seasons

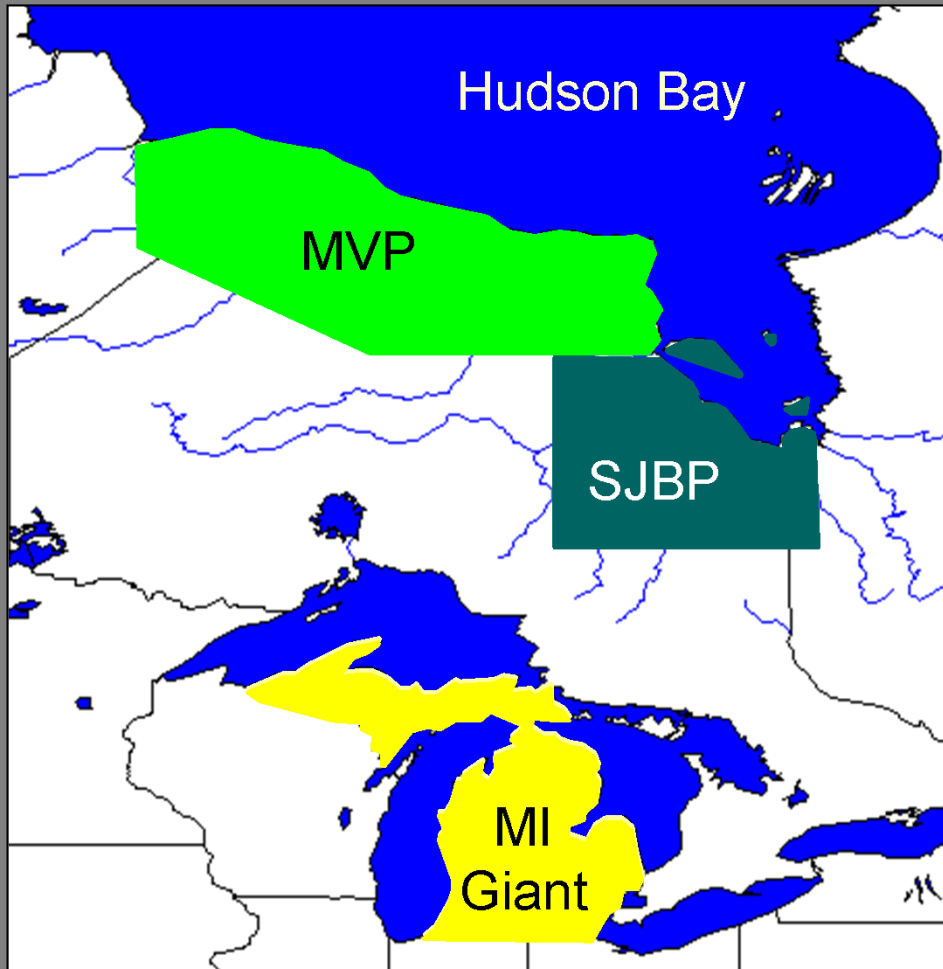
- July
 - Regulations for information at NRC
 - Mississippi Flyway Council
 - USFWS Regulations Committee
 - Set late season framework
- August
 - CWAC Meeting
 - Regulations for action at NRC
 - Late Season Selections Due to USFWS



Canada Goose Status and Regulation Considerations



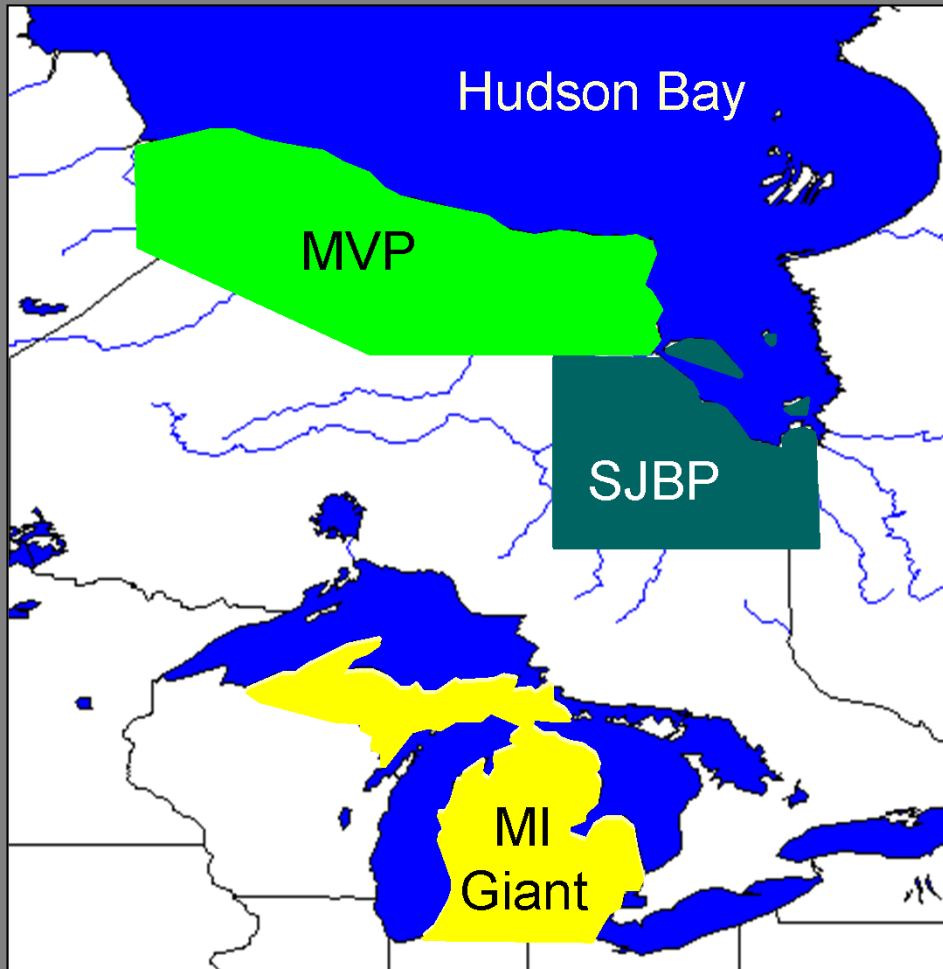
Canada Goose Breeding Ranges



- Mississippi Valley Population (MVP)
- Southern James Bay Population (SJBP)
- Michigan Giant Population (MI Giant)



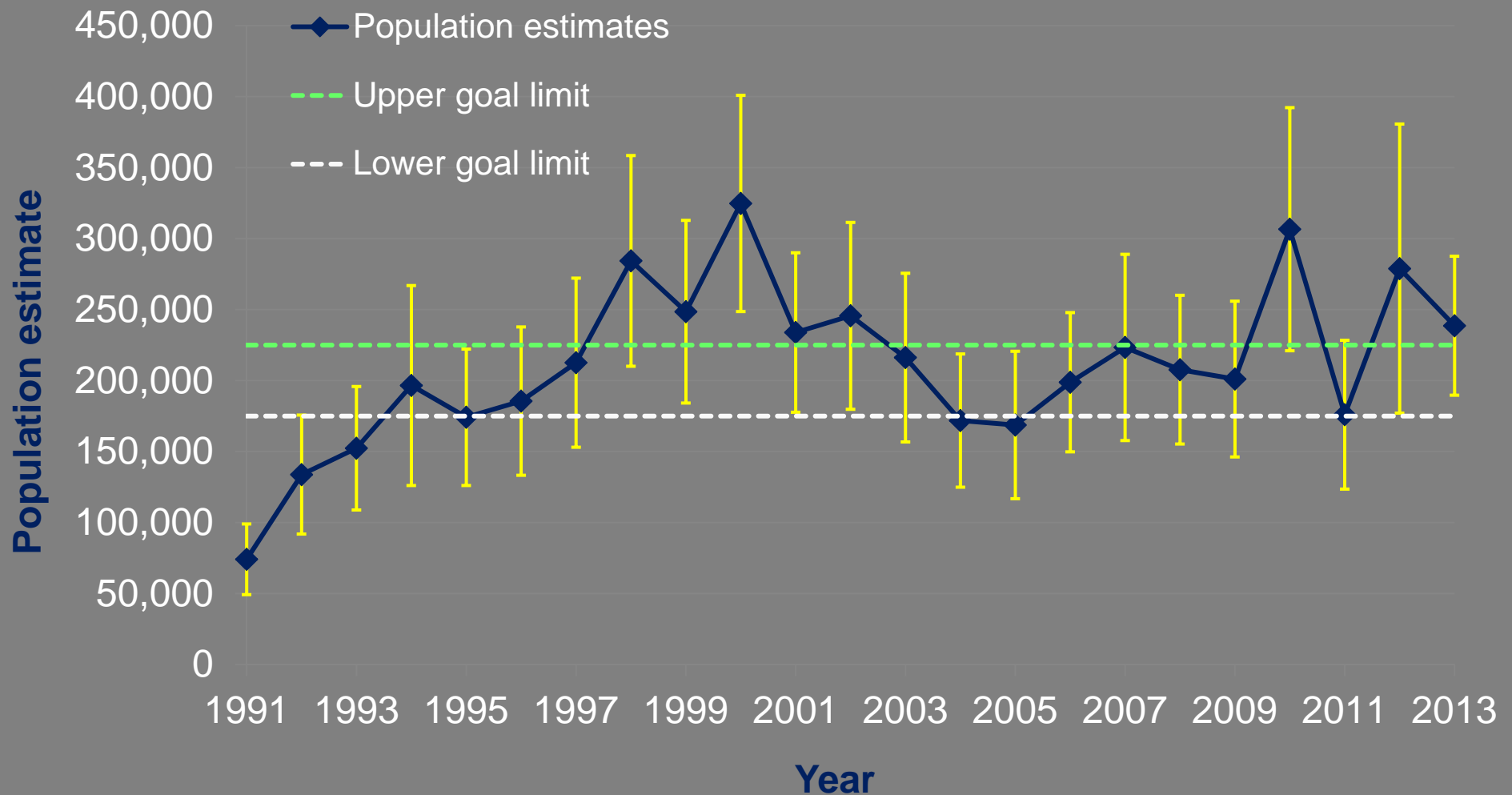
2012-13 Canada Goose Population Change



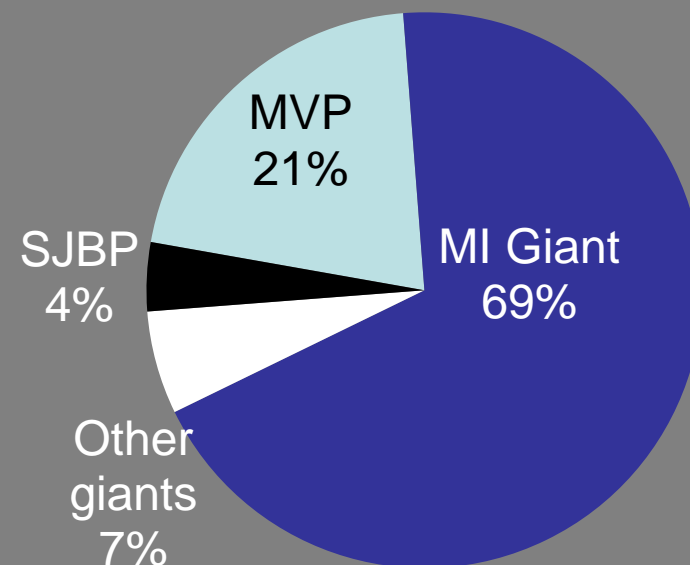
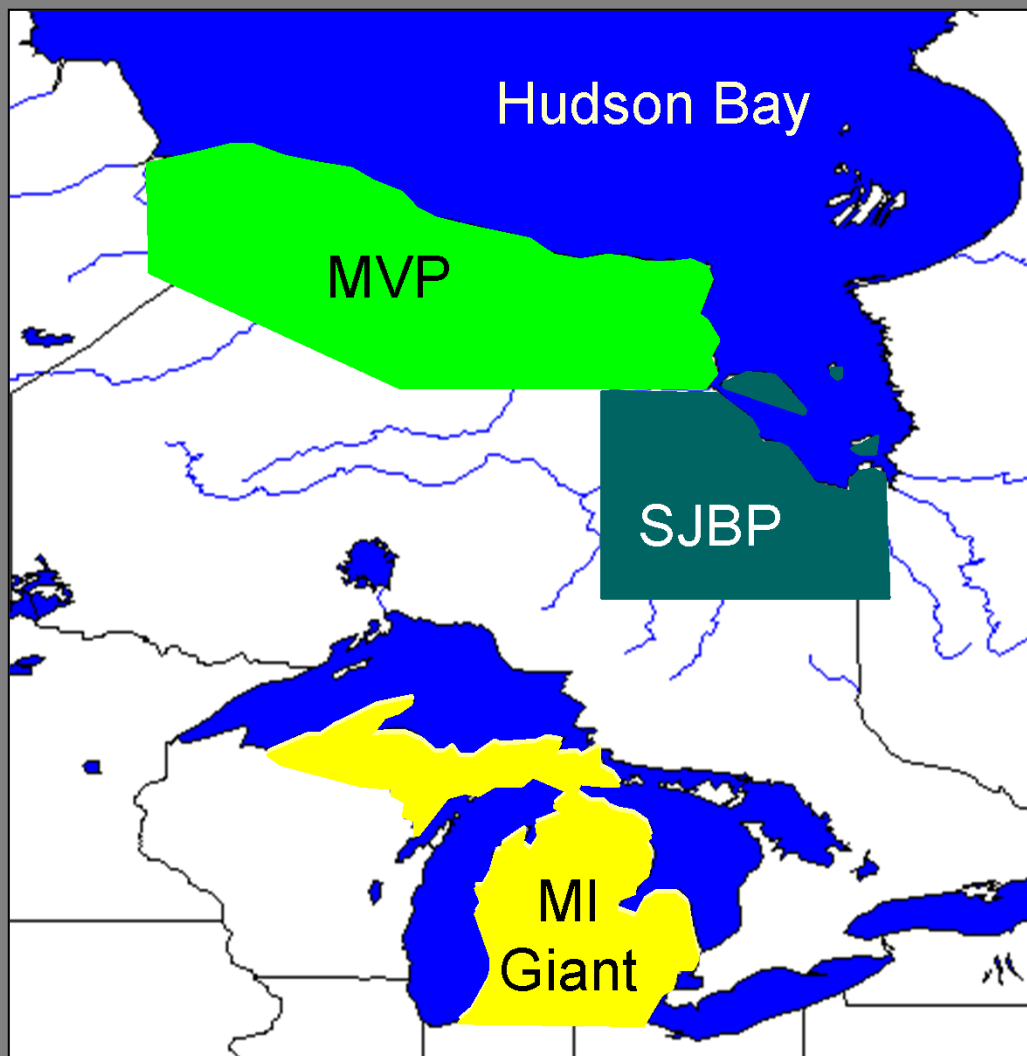
- MVP stable
- SJB down
- MI Giant down



Michigan Canada Goose Population Estimates, 1991-2013



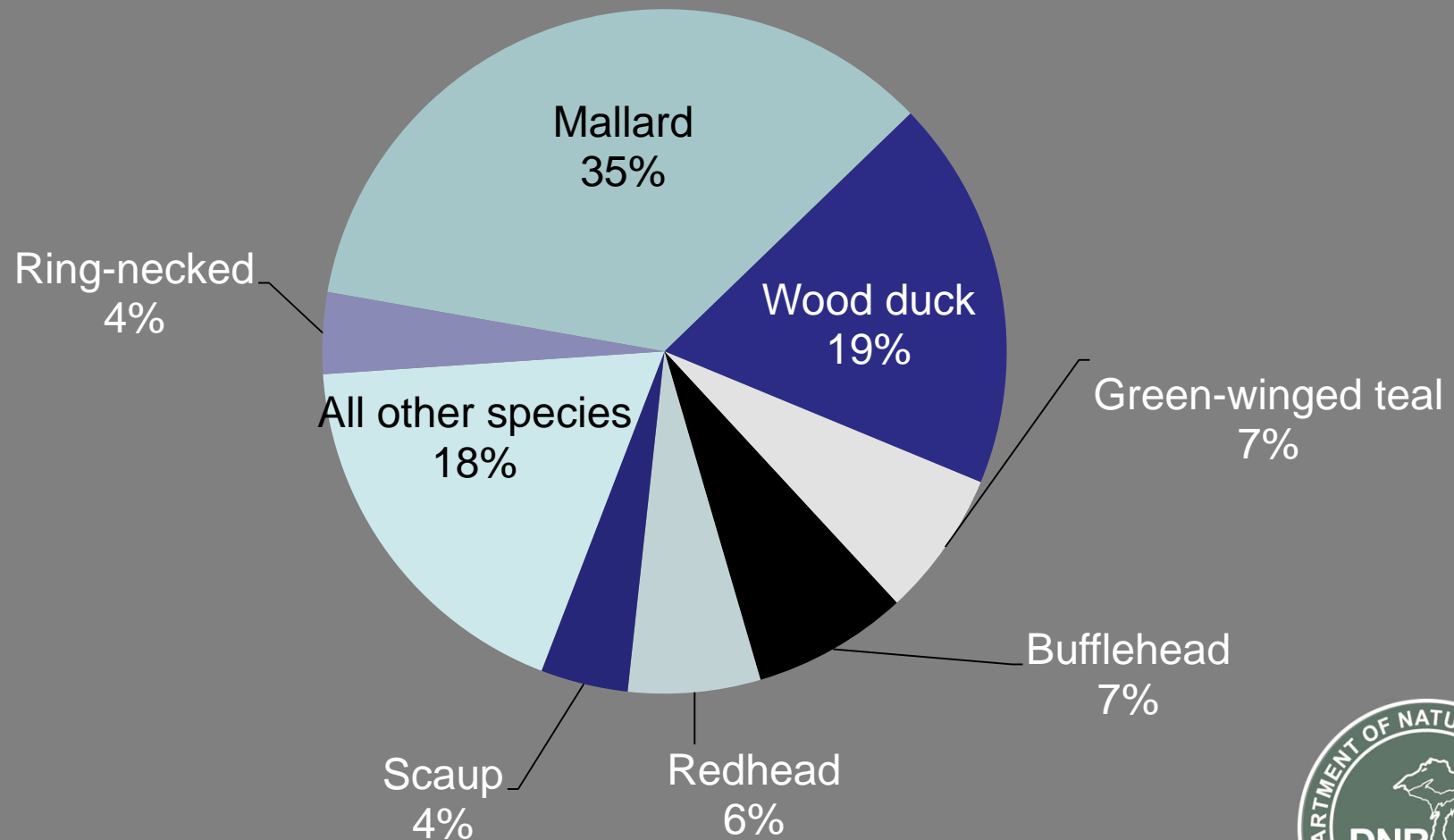
Michigan Canada Goose Harvest Composition



Duck Status and Regulation Considerations



Michigan Duck Harvest 2010-11



Habitat Conditions

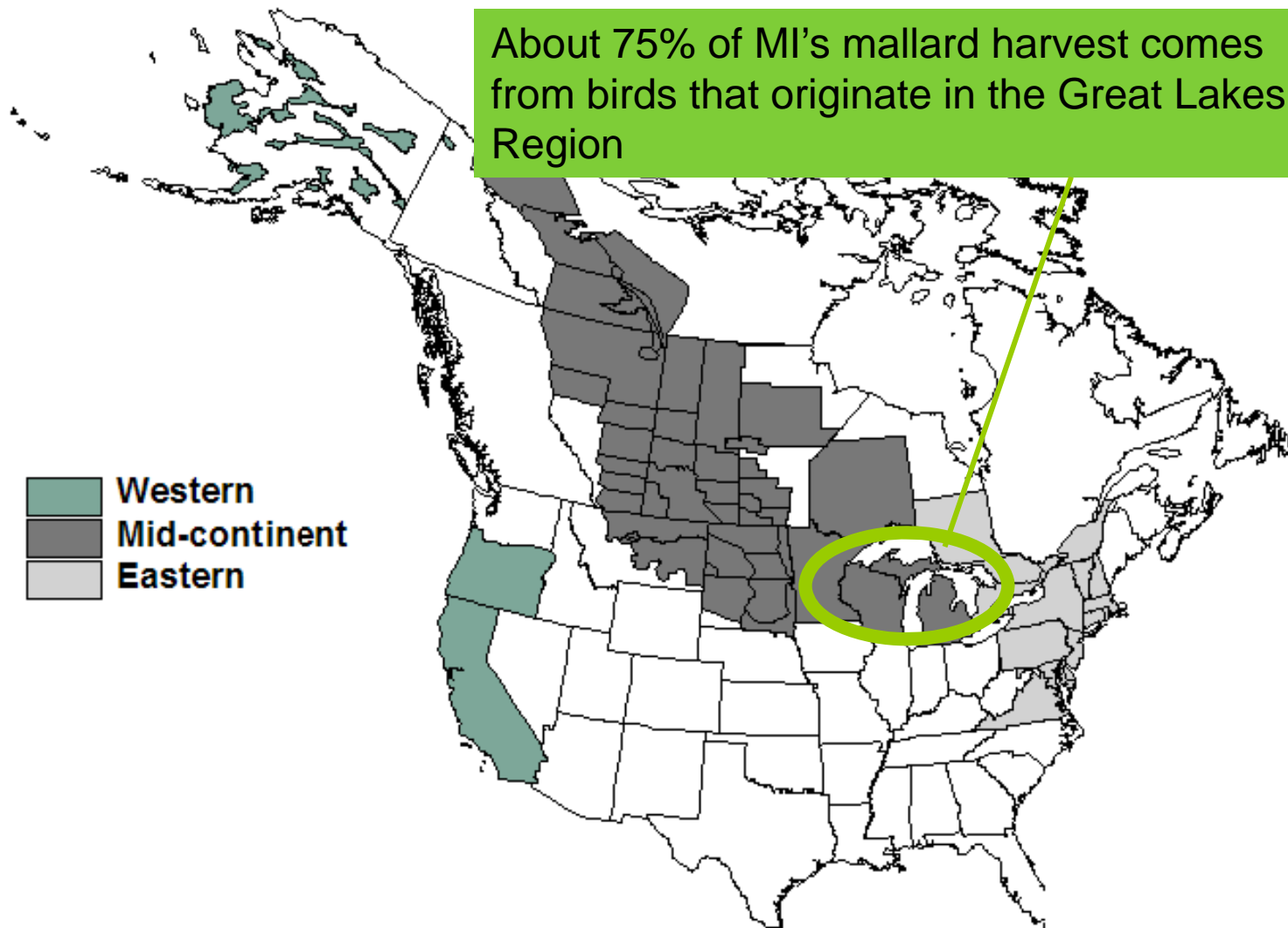
- Waterfowl habitat conditions during waterfowl breeding population and habitat survey
- Generally late wet spring across traditional survey area
- Mostly good to excellent throughout prairies and parklands
- Similar or improved conditions from 2012

Continental Duck Population Status

- Duck population estimates unavailable
- Early indications are similar numbers compared to 2012
 - Mallards
 - Canvasbacks
 - Scaup
 - Pintails



Michigan Mallard Harvest



Michigan Mallard & Wetland Estimates

- 2013 Mallard estimate approximately 289,000
 - Down 34% from 2012
 - Stable in last decade
 - Below 1990's population estimates
- 2013 Wetland Count
 - Up 29% from 2012
 - Declining slightly in last decade



What Can We Expect?

- Likely no major changes in season length and bag limits
- Likely liberal season (60 days, 6 ducks)
- Similar opportunity for canvasbacks, scaup, and pintails



Processes to Complete

- Mid-July
 - Consider additional waterfowl population status information



Processes to Complete

- Mid-July
 - Consider additional waterfowl population status information
- July 25-26
 - MFC provides framework recommendations to USFWS



Processes to Complete

- Mid-July
 - Consider additional waterfowl population status information
- July 25-26
 - MFC provides framework recommendations to USFWS
- July 29-30
 - Frameworks set by USFWS Regulation Committee



Processes to Complete

- August 3
 - Meet with CWAC to discuss options for state waterfowl regulations



Processes to Complete

- August 3
 - Meet with CWAC to discuss options for state waterfowl regulations
- No later than August 5
 - Late memo to NRC



Processes to Complete

- August 3
 - Meet with CWAC to discuss options for state waterfowl regulations
- No later than August 5
 - Late memo to NRC
- August 8
 - Provide Late Season recommendations to NRC for action on:
 - Bag limits
 - Season dates



Managed Waterfowl Areas – Purpose

- High-quality habitat for waterfowl (breeding and migration) and other wetland species
- High-quality waterfowl hunting opportunities
- Other recreational opportunities
- Unique: habitat, species using the area, size, and hunter preferences
- Consistent regulations when possible



Pointe Mouillee State Game Area Refuge Dates

- Current refuge closure: September 15 to close of waterfowl season
- Recommend refuge closure: September 1 to December 15
 - Increase consistency
 - Reduce confusion
 - Supported by law enforcement, hunters, trappers, and local organizations



Managing Raccoons for Waterfowl Production

- Recommendation to allow raccoon hunting and trapping, year round, by permit
 - Fennville Farm Unit, Crow Island, Fish Pt., Nayanquing Pt., Pte. Mouillee, Shiawassee, Harsens Island
 - Posted closures apply
- Additional tool to enhance waterfowl production



Hunting with Spinning-wing Decoys Shiawassee River SGA

- Ban during 2010-2012 hunting seasons
- Three-year evaluation summary:
 - Approval of using SWDs has decreased between 2009 and 2011 and more hunters approve of ban
 - Reduced hunting efficiency of duck hunters, however overall duck harvest unchanged compared to other areas
 - Improved hunting efficiency of goose hunters and goose harvest increased



Hunting with Spinning-wing Decoys Shiawassee River SGA

- 3-year evaluation summary:
 - More hunters indicated improved hunt quality
 - More hunters agreed ban led to better decoying and closer shots of ducks and geese
 - More hunters agreed ban led to better distribution of duck and goose harvest
 - Ban has not changed frequency of hunting
 - Higher proportion indicated they would increase hunting activity



Hunting with Spinning-wing Decoys Shiawassee River SGA

- Recommend continuing ban
- Supported by Shiawassee Flats Citizens and Hunters Association and CWAC



Hunting with Spinning-wing Decoys Harsens Island

- Harsens Island Waterfowl Hunters Association proposal
- Recommendation to ban spinning-wing decoys for at least three seasons
 - Also supported by Waterfowl USA – St. Clair Flats No. 1 Chapter and the St. Clair Flats Waterfowlers Association
 - CWAC provided no recommendation
 - Enhance quality of hunts





Thank You



www.michigan.gov/dnr

